

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

Hackney's OTHER Newspaper

Petition to cover all Hackney

SIGN HERE FOR PEACE!

Hackney Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament launched its new street petition campaign at the end of September. The aim is to ask for signatures from every household in the borough between now and Christmas, to present first to Hackney Council and then to the GLC.

The petition demands that Hackney publishes all war plans in its possession, campaigns to end transport of nuclear materials through the borough, makes Hackney a nuclear-free zone and puts pressure on the GLC. Below, a member of Hackney CND writes about the campaign:

It is a matter of fact that disarmament is the single most important issue in the world today. Nothing could cause such total catastrophe as the use of nuclear weapons, and few things are as controversial as the debate

which rages around the "process" of disarmament. Politicians and the media both have their say, usually fitted in between the war films or slotted on a rack among the war comics, and there are few individual voices to be

heard. A petition takes the debate of disarmament from behind the television screen on to the front doorstep. To make people - who may have already heard a lot - actually think and reach a decision (something which the mass



media rarely does - apart from in the negative action of apathy). With a petition you can either agree or disagree - you can't half sign it! The subject of disarmament is no longer a safe-behind-the-screen newsreader

but a pen in your hand. What will you do when you sign it? Does it not take more than just a stroke of your pen to stop the manufacture of nuclear weapons? Of course it does, but even

Continued on p. 3.

Library protest knocks out Council

The September meeting of Hackney Council was disrupted to such an extent that the entire business after question time was passed without discussion. The disturbances were caused by a group from the Hackney Ethnic Minorities Library Consultative Committee who had been frustrated in their attempts to put their case before the Council with an official delegation. After they had been refused again, when the item was raised as a point of order at the meeting itself, such a rumpus was caused that the meeting was adjourned twice, Mayor Martin Ottolangui became too ill to continue, the clock fell down from its position in front of the gallery and Councillor Patrick Kodikara was accused of being in league with the Communist Party and organising the whole show.

The last claim is so rid-

iculously unlikely that it may safely be discounted as being a figment of Councillor Bob Masters' vivid imagination. Certainly there were members of Hackney CP present in the gallery while the disturbances occurred, but there were also members of other organisations - even the Labour party itself.

INACTION

What occurred was the product of growing frustration at inaction, as was explained in an open letter a few weeks previously, from the Ethnic Minorities Library Committee: "Education has always been a major concern to the ethnic minority community in Hackney, consequently many community activists spend an enormous amount of time discussing educational issues. Hitherto these efforts have failed to influence Hackney Council and the educationalists who

are empowered to ensure that the educational system benefits the total community of Hackney.

"In the last month or two, members of the ethnic minority community have taken it upon themselves to see what, if anything, the Library Service is doing. Overall we found that there haven't been any significant changes within the Library to give even the slightest indication of the presence of the ethnic minority community since their arrival. (The library still stocks outdated racist and sexist literature.) This is quite understandable once you have met its administrators, but it seems in conflict with the arguments of the Hackney Labour group. These findings prompted various groups within the borough to effect a two-pronged approach to the problem - setting up our own libraries and prompting the

library service to recognise their responsibility to the ethnic minority community."

Eventually a meeting was held between the Acting Borough Librarian and several members of this committee. It has been alleged since that the librarian said that "he and his staff were professionals and would not welcome any ethnic minority participation". Not surprisingly, that attitude hardened feelings that nothing would be done, despite protestations from councillors that steps would be taken.

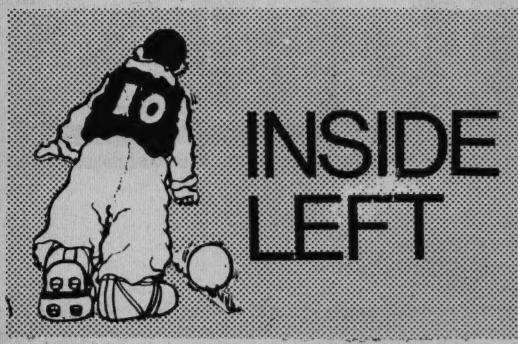
FINAL

Councillor Kate Hoey, chair of the Leisure Services Committee, which covers libraries, made a statement to the Council meeting before the final adjournment. This promised a high-level meeting between herself, library staff, other councillors and

members of the ethnic minorities committee. She did not indicate during the meeting her willingness, about which she told HPP afterwards, to set up a consultative committee, which would advise the libraries what to buy in the field of ethnic minorities literature.

This would include representatives of ethnic minority groups, but it would only be able to recommend to the library staff what to buy.

This might have defused the situation somewhat. However, the demands of the Ethnic Minorities Committee are entirely legitimate, even though Hackney Council will say that they are pushing an open door. Certainly there is racist and sexist literature published in abundance. It is up to councils like Hackney to clear the dead wood of offensive material out of its own stock cupboards and show a lead.



BORN TO LEAD

Hackney's leadership has been decided for the next four years, although you haven't read about any election yet. Some 90 names are now on a list in the possession of the Local Government Committee of the three Hackney Labour parties, and from these names the lucky 60 lads and lasses who will join battle with lone Tory Joe and lone Lib Jeff and lone Social Democrat (!) Denis will be selected. There aren't many surprises on the list and none of the individual party general management committees has so far struck any of the nominations off, so, as yet, all is sweetness and light in the smoke-filled back rooms.

Battle will be joined between now and next spring as each individual ward chooses its preferred people from the panel. There are those who revel in this wheeling and dealing: the long conspiratorial late-night phone calls, the clandestine lobbying in pubs. There are also those whose natural charm, commitment to socialism and transparent integrity shine through. Far be it from me to

put each candidate into one of these two camps. Oh, no.

A pointer to what might happen in the full elections next May will be provided by the by-election now pending in West Down ward. This has been caused by another acute case of chronic death amongst Hackney's old guard, in this case Martin Ottolangui's loyal sidekick John Wobey. Wobey represented the same ward as Ottolangui, a ward that has recently been won over by the newcomers in Hackney Central Labour Party. No candidate has yet been selected, and there will doubtless be an interesting struggle to see whether the forces of progress triumph over the forces of reaction.

DELAY

Either way, Labour will have a fight to hold on to the seat, especially if they delay the election by any length of time. Although the SDP is still not off the ground in the area - and the ward is hardly fertile middle-class territory for them, they will doubtless hope to do well. Last year when Labour delayed holding a

by-election in Shoreditch the Liberals stole the march on them - and won the seat - by moving the writ for the election themselves. The Hackney Gazette will doubtless be on the sides of the "moderates", particularly if some dangerous lefty is chosen to succeed well-liked, born-and-bred, middle-of-the-roader Wobey.

Perhaps the most startling thing that the Local Government Committee has done in the preparation for this round of Council election is its decision to open up the manifesto-making process for consultation. This is a genuine step forward from the old system of deciding a manifesto amongst a small group of people, producing as few copies as can possibly be got away with, getting elected and then conveniently forgetting about the whole thing. This year a large number of working groups have been set up, hundreds of papers have been drafted and these are all going to be presented to a consultative conference open to anyone at the end of the month. This sounds like an exercise in democracy, and should not be decried. Least of all by me. So I won't. I hereby award the Herbert Morrison Gold Star for Effort to the Local Government Committee of the Hackney Labour parties. What happens to the Keir Hardie Prize for Achievement I leave to another day.

We would like to hear both (or all) sides of these questions discussed, so we have asked staff from the units as well as ex-patients to take part in our forum. We realise, however, that not everyone with something to contribute will be able to get to the meeting, or necessarily speak in public if they do, so we are inviting written comments on the units beforehand.

By coincidence, there will be two public meetings on Hackney's psychiatric units in October. The City and Hackney Association for Mental Health have organised one on the BBC television series, "Maybury". This will be at Homerton Library on Wednesday 16 October at 7pm. The Community Care Workshop forum will be at Centerprise on Wednesday 21 October, also at 7pm. Your reporter, in some disguise or other, will no doubt be at both, and I hope many of your readers as well.

Andrew Roberts,
Community Care Workshop
Co-ordinator

PSYCHIATRIC UNITS

Dear HPP

Hackney Workers' Educational Association would like to hear your readers' experiences and opinions on the two local psychiatric units: the one in "F Block" at Hackney hospital and the one in the German Hospital. Our "Community Care Workshop" is planning a public forum on them for October 21 around the theme of whether the units are really part of a modern "community care" programme, or just "mental hospitals" with a new name.

We are planning this meeting because of criticisms made by local social workers at a previous meeting. You may have read of these in "Law-letter". They complained about a lack of facilities to help cope with mentally distressed people in the community and about pressures put on them by doctors, relatives and the police to have clients admitted to the hospitals. They also expressed concern about the way patients were being treated when they were admitted, about patients' mail being opened, about patients whose cases were not properly considered until 10 days after they were admitted, about voluntary patients being admitted on a "section" so that they could be stopped from leaving if they changed their mind, and about an excessive use of drugs to keep patients quiet.

Cuts are being made, in terms of reducing services and staff that will affect all areas of the project. For example, from October we will be cutting staffing in the coffee bar and public office. This will mean that we won't be serving lunches and the coffee bar will close at 8pm; the office will be open to the public only in the afternoons, and there will be an ansaphone service operating only in the mornings. We can no longer continue to employ sessional workers.

We are launching an emergency public appeal as well as making applications to several public grant funding bodies. We have to raise a lot of money in the next six months or the project will have to close!

Please come to a meeting at Centerprise on 12 October at 7pm to discuss the implications of this crisis in detail and to find ways of supporting Centerprise through this period.

Maggie Hewitt
for Centerprise Council of Management

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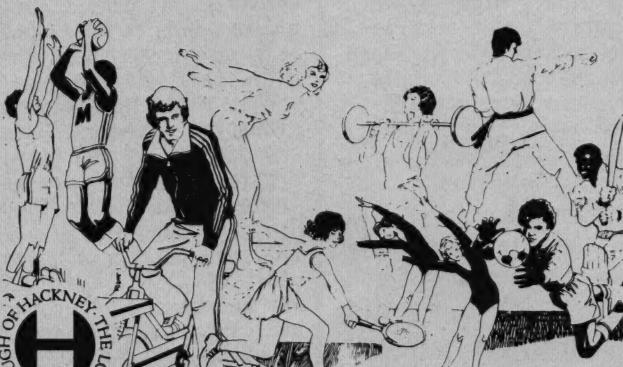
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SIGN FOR PEACE!

Continued from p.1.

so, petitions are formed on the basis that a mass number of signatures actually put pressure on whoever they are directed at. In this case, Hackney CND has directed its petition not at central government, but first at Hackney Council, and then at the GLC. This may seem slightly confusing, for a Council which openly supports us, and a GLC which is sympathetic. But then, this petition cannot be seen as pressure. It is more a vote of confidence. If Hackney CND is to have any validity, we have to have the support of the mass of the population in the borough. Last year when we were involved in the national petitioning campaign, we found that there was on average 65 per cent support. It will be interesting to see if this has increased as the date for the arrival of Cruise missiles draws nearer, and after President Reagan's recent decision to manufacture the Neutron bomb.

The petition also serves to put CND directly in touch with the feelings of people in London. Do they care about disarmament? How real do they see a Russian threat? Do they believe a nuclear war will really take place? Hackney CND will face - and face bluntly - the real fears and questions which matter to people now. And we will answer them. So often in the past, CND has relied on the "moral" argument - perhaps the most clear-cut - to justify its existence. On the doorstep we will meet more controversial facets of disarmament. Yet this is all to the good. There is nothing like a good argument to sharpen one's teeth on, and indeed - if CND cannot succeed on the doorstep, then it is certainly doomed to failure under Mr Not's barrage.

The petition will form the basis of a platform that we can work from. It will show us the direction we should be moving in. It will demonstrate what we are doing wrong.

Petitioning the whole of Hackney is a daunting task, but we are determined to succeed. It will lead us on to a new level of campaigning, desperately needed if we are to face realistically the arrival of Cruise missiles in 1983.

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T.U.C. week

Les Skeates, a Hackney Council worker, was one of this year's delegates to the TUC from his union NUPE, the Public Employees. HPP asked him for his impressions of the conference.

This year the TUC took many progressive policy decisions. For example on peace, at last the TUC has taken a unilateral position on nuclear weapons. In fact the only opposition to this came from the likes of Boyd and the AUEW, who argued for multilateral negotiation.

Also on the EEC, the TUC decided to demand withdrawal without a referendum.

Congress also decided that a change is needed in the way in which the General Council is elected. At present the General Council, the TUC's governing body, is elected by trade group. Though this has the advantage that some of the strategically important smaller unions are represented on the General Council it means that the likes of Frnak Chapple are elected unopposed. The change proposed for next year would give seats as per the size of the union. (i.e. 1,000,000 members mean five seats). This would remove from Congress the right to decide who goes on the General Council, but could mean that left unions like NUPE could increase their representation.

All of this tinkering with the General Council still will not change the basic problem of democracy in the TUC. The Congress is just a showpiece and all the major decisions are taken behind the stage. This is a practice that disenfranchises the delegates on the floor and removes them from any real democratic decision making. So far, the left has failed to come up with any viable alternative form of democracy, which has meant that the right are making the running for democratic change, even if their ideas of democracy means less democracy.

A major development has been the election of five women to the General Council to specially reserved seats. But as far as delegates go, women were very poorly represented, which itself reflects the position of women in society as a whole.

Out & About

This month, HPP's new writer Hercules Sayago goes to court, tries to interview the Council leader and investigates the unemployment figures.

Hackney Legal Defence Committee has been discussing the numerous amounts of charges and court cases to be heard of the peoples involved in the clashes with the police. Not only in Hackney but also outside London.

In one case involving a person in the Dalston area in July, he was charged with assault, driving a car at the troops of police and using abusive language. At the hearing on 14 September the magistrate found doubts in the case and dismissed all three charges.

The owners of Johnson's cafe was also in Highbury court at the same time, and he was dismissed also.

The committee mention that there is great need for parents and youth to co-operate with each other to organise a right and regular course of action, to respond to unfair

policing in the community. It's not easy to find suitable solicitors who are prepared to help in these tragic times, we need feedback to people affected needing legal help.

Going back into history black people have been suffering over the ages through political conflicts, therefore one cannot left unmentioned moral values and standards of the races as a whole. As they look upon us as sex-machines: all...ah...onu, best. Read this carefully with good understanding to avoid built-up conflicts in living with one another. Taking into serious consideration the catastrophic reaction to policing and unemployment against peoples, with greater emphasis on the black generation: Homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals. These lead only to give space for deception, crime, passive failure and being used by the cunning. Whomever I is: make

it echo in your mind the moral of being right.

There are various campaigns and supports for people in distress living in the borough of Hackney. I was not granted an interview by the leader of the council. I am prepared to publicise both letters received from his secretary, for the public's view-eye.

From the Manpower Service Commission I received the employment figures for a press report.

Today I went to the Job Centre and I received the figures of men and women who have been fortunate in obtaining jobs: the figures are respectively, 3,285; 1,932. I asked if they knew the blacks from the whites. I was told, No, they only do a head count.

Speaking in a colloquial tongue for the peoples: to be ahead of the jobless queue, pay attention to your heads in using shampoo and having a clean soaped face. Then apply to ATV for a share of the national stake.

Charges dropped

Many of the court cases resulting from the uprising on the streets of Dalston and Stoke Newington in July have now been heard. The results of these have shown that in a quite large number the police have either offered no evidence or that magistrates have acquitted defendants. This shows what was suspected at the time, that the police were making random arrests, using any excuse to clear the streets and not worrying too much whether the case stood up in court.

Two particular cases have important consequences. The first involved a number of people arrested during an incident on the Wednesday, 8 July in Sandringham Road. All of these charges have now been dropped. These people were the first arrested during the uprising, and there is no doubt that their arrest helped to inflame the situation further.

The second is the dropping of the case against the owner of Johnson's cafe in Sandringham Road. He had been charged with possession of offensive weapons and other serious offences, in an attempt to justify the raids on the cafe.

The Hackney Legal Defence Committee is continuing to monitor the court cases and give help to people arrested and injured during the events. Over 100 people were arrested and there are still a number of people whose cases have not yet been heard. They are coming up at the Old Bailey in November.

The Hackney Legal Defence Committee is still short of funds to carry on its work. It is hoping to organise advice sessions and print information which might be useful to anyone arrested in the future. If you can help in any way, please contact HLDC, c/o 245 Mare Street, E8.

Free Sport

Every so often we like to give a few hearty cheers for Hackney Council and, yes, it's that time of year again!

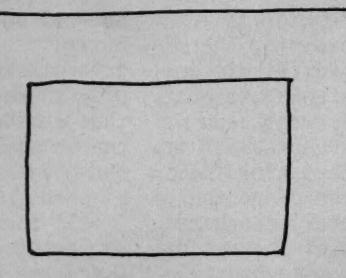
The Council has decided to open all its leisure facilities free to unemployed people, during office hours at sports centres, swimming pools and parks on weekdays. This is apparently the first time that any council any-

where in the country has taken such a step, and one that should be roundly applauded.

Rumours that when Michael Heseltine heard of this decision he decided to top a few more millions from Hackney's grants meaning that all the leisure facilities will have to be closed have not been entirely discounted in Town Hall circles.

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What we want for Hackney



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

A few suggestions on what we should be aiming for:

- a re-evaluation of "employment" as a priority spending area;
- b. parents consulted for their opinions of existing facilities for under-7s. A respect for young children as future citizens with legitimate needs now;
- c. an end to avoiding the over-14s as a "difficult age group", by listening to what they themselves want, and helping them to establish it, perhaps through junior TAs, joint committees of youth workers and local teenagers;
- d. a spreading of the resources enjoyed by some specialist clubs, eg, the various cadet groups. A link up with

social services and ILEA camps and holiday homes;

- e. consultation with HCRE, Caribbean House, Hackney Cypriot Assn, etc, over the successes and the gaps to fill;
- f. a system that doesn't require a minimum four years for an adventure playground to be established, with up to several more before a hut is built;
- g. a streamlining of holiday playschemes provision, so that subsidies and grants can be more smoothly obtained and projects even better planned.

All the above are ideas up for discussion. No doubt there are many more you can add, and some you can improve on.

ENVIRONMENT

What's the first thing that strikes you about Hackney's environment? Littered streets? Delapidated housing? Roads with bad surfaces? Broken pavements? Lorries and heavy traffic that isn't stopping in Hackney, polluting the atmosphere and causing danger to pedestrians?

Hackney Council has control over many of these things. The GLC has control over others. Who do we put pressure on to change the quality of the services we pay for through the rates? Local councillors? The environmental health department? Many of us have good

ideas about how we can use pieces of vacant land and generally improve the look of our streets by planting trees and encouraging people to take an interest in the environment beyond their front doors. How do we organise? Often there is an existing organisation like the tenants' association or the housing action area group. How can those organisations make their voices heard and be effective?

Hackney Council is one of the few councils which doesn't have a borough plan. While they are working on

DAY CONFERENCE

The articles on these two pages are all taken from the background papers prepared for the conference "What We Want for Hackney", being held at Clissold Park School, on Sunday 4 October. The conference is being organised by Hackney Community Action, the umbrella group representing the community groups in the borough. Besides discussion, there will be entertainment, films, tape and slide shows, food and a creche. A bit more than the usual conference.

The purpose of this conference? To develop a "community manifesto" for the Council elections in May 1982. It is hoped that the discussions - which will take place on all the areas outlined below - will lead to a positive and exciting manifesto which will have a real effect on the Council after the elections take place.

Even if you can't get along to Clissold Park School on 4 October, we hope that you will find the articles below interesting. If you have any comments then please contact Hackney Community Action, 380 Old St, EC1. (729 5536).

HEALTH

The Council is directly responsible for environmental health and accident prevention. It is also responsible for social services, including meals on wheels, home helps and aids for the handicapped.

- a. Pollution - is enough being done about lead and other pollution? Are play facilities safe?



- b. Are our canals, derelict buildings, houses, dangerous places?

- c. Traffic accidents - should there be a minimum age that a child can cross the road alone? How can we make cycling safer?

- d. Accidents in the home - do childproof medicine containers work?

Are there gaps in the provision of care for the elderly, handicapped and sick? Is enough help given in caring for people at home? Do we need mobile wardens and the kind of nursing homes that exist only in the private sector?

Are GPs and their premises providing what they should?

Does the ambulance service work?

What is the future of St Leonard's Hospital?

Should the uses of health centres be extended? Are the family planning, maternity and well-women clinics geared to what women need and want? Are there enough screening clinics?

DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION

~~How do we find ways of extending the control people in Hackney have over their own lives? How do we effectively participate in the structures and institutions that control our lives?~~

The operations of the local council are only one area where we lack control. What about central government, newspapers, television, the workplace, shops? For example, do we get a proper say and are we well informed by the Hackney Gazette or Hackney People's Press?

More and more decisions are taken centrally, further away from the people who experience the result of the decisions. Recently Michael Heseltine, the Environment Minister, has decided that central government should start controlling how far

~~rates can be put up. What does the community do to counter these trends? How can we get a say?~~

~~Strong, independent, diverse groups? Politically autonomous groups? Groups in which local people really want to participate and do participate?~~

~~The Council~~

~~Who runs the Council? Central government? Officers? Councillors?~~

~~Who are councillors accountable to? What about the recent move to co-opted representatives from HCA, Trades Council, HCRE? Can they function properly? What happens when there is a conflict?~~

THE ELDERLY

There are a number of deep-rooted prejudices that the elderly face. Perhaps one that this discussion should look at is the prejudice where the elderly are seen as the "needy", incapable of acting for themselves, and unable to make a contribution to their community.

Elderly people face special problems in health and housing, which are often misunderstood or ignored.

Many elderly people are dependent on means-tested benefits to give them enough to live on.

Why has a public campaign to raise the basic retirement pension to an adequate figure not come into being?

Many elderly people live in fear of violence, both in the street and at home.

Task Force will be inviting one or two people to make brief speeches at the conference/workshop to look at the following issues:

- a. Pensioner participation



in planning facilities and services for themselves in the borough;

b. The position of elderly people from ethnic minorities with regard to the host community;

c. The role of national campaigns in improving living conditions for pensioners and the future of these in the borough.

Finally, what is available for the elderly in the borough, and where do you find out about it?





ETHNIC MINORITIES

Issues which will be looked at:

- Institutional racism - mainly in education, housing, employment, immigration and the law.
- The education of our children must reflect our rich culture. More relevant black books in libraries, black artists to be encouraged and given facilities.
- Housing - more black officers, allocation of better accommodation for black people.
- The council must employ more black workers at all levels.
- The Council must support more black projects, especially those that would yield more benefit to our people.
- The Council must work towards the repeal of the new Nationality Act.
- The Council must work for the realisation of community policing.
- The Council must finance all projects that will improve community relations in this multi-racial society.

LEISURE

Do leisure facilities reflect the needs and interests of the people of Hackney, or do they represent what the Council think we should have?

Who decides which are the priorities? Both in terms of what we get and where we get it.

Hackney has established a Leisure Services Directorate. Will this mean a tightening up of Hackney's approach to the community, regarding leisure, or will it mean that the community will get what it wants by having more of a say?

Leisure Services intend to conduct a survey to find out what people really want to see money spent on. What is the best way to find out? Through existing groups? By holding public meetings?

The Council say they are going to shift a major part of arts and entertainment funds to the support of community arts, and other organisations active in and coming out of community need. How can this be done in the fairest way? Who should they consult? How do they decide who gets what?

Most Hackney people use parks. Are there enough and are the facilities adequate? Should more provision be made for community gardens and allotments? How can tenants get improved facilities for their estates?

Are the libraries accessible to the public? Do they reflect the needs of a multi-racial society? Do they still contain sexist and racist books? Can the disabled use libraries easily?

WOMEN

When we planned the conference we thought it was important to have a workshop where women could say what they wanted to see in Hackney in all the other areas covered by the conference. By looking at these areas from a woman's perspective then we can begin to make some demands.

Employment

a. Equal Opportunities. Hackney is an equal opportunities employer - but does it really work?
b. Jobsharing. Hackney has a policy on jobsharing. Does it implement it?
c. Unskilled jobs. Hackney has a high proportion of women workers in unskilled, manual jobs - eg clothing.
d. Homeworking. What is its extent and what can be done?

Transport

Does the transport system meet the needs of women? Does it isolate women who live in cut off places?

Leisure

What do women do in their

leisure time?(!) What facilities exist in sport, especially for young women? To what extent do street hassles stop women using leisure time to the full?

Childcare

What facilities exist and how good are they? Should childcare be controlled by parents of local authorities? Should there be more community nurseries?

Education and training

Although education is controlled by ILEA, Hackney still runs the libraries. Should it ban all sexist books? Could the Council adopt a more flexible attitude to training? Could it take on women apprentices in the Direct Labour force?

Health

Does the NHS meet the needs of women? Could clinics be better organised?

Advertising

Does the Council have any powers to control the content of the advertising which goes on its hoardings?

EMPLOYMENT & ECONOMY

What sort of jobs do people do in Hackney? Where do they work, what are they paid and who do they work for?

What about all the people who do not have a job? Hackney has more people unemployed than most other parts of London. The latest figures show that 17% of adult males don't have a job. The situation for some groups like school leavers, black people, women and older people is even worse.

What sorts of jobs do we want to encourage in the borough? The Council has begun to take a greater interest in the local economic and industrial situation. How can we make sure that the policies it develops are in the interest of working people in Hackney?

Should there be municipal firms set up in Hackney by the Council to make goods that are needed in the area.

What sort of firms and jobs should the Council and Government be encouraging in Hackney? How do we control the conditions in factories that get subsidies? Should any public money go to small firms, or should sectors that can't sustain employment providing decent wages and conditions be allowed to collapse?

What can we do to get decent training for all ages and experience? YOP is no substitute for a proper training policy. Where are all the apprenticeships in Hackney, who gets them and how do we ensure that training is open to people from all backgrounds and that it will be relevant to jobs that will be around in 20 years from now?

How does the Council's own activity as an employer and consumer affect the local economy? Could the Council use its economic power more effectively?

What about new technology? Could it increase wealth in Hackney? Will it attract firms that will employ local people? Are we getting the right education and training for new technology?

TRANSPORT

Should there be more restrictions of private car usage? Should the roads be improved to accommodate heavier lorries?

Do we need more bus lanes? What effects do heavy traffic have on our lives in terms of noise, danger and lead pollution? What should Hackney Council be doing about these issues?

Are you happy with existing bus and train services?

What can be done to make public transport more effective? Will the new fare structures help in building a better, more reliable system? Should Hackney have its own tube line? What should be the future of the North London line?

Should Hackney provide more facilities for shared community transport and what lessons can we learn from other schemes in the country? Could car sharing be a way to improve community mobility?

Should one per cent of the transport budget be spent on cycling?

And, if so, how should it be allocated? To more cycle routes, or improved road surfaces?

How should maximum use be made of our canals? What part can they play in an integrated freight system?

These are just a few of the issues that will be covered in the workshop.

How about the following resolutions for consideration?

- Bus lane and parking regulations ought to be more strictly enforced.
- Night time and weekend lorry bans should be introduced and enforced.
- Broad Street line should be kept open.
- Cycle routes should be implemented and road surfaces improved.
- Serious consideration should be given to the provision of more community transport.
- Canals should be considered more seriously as an alternative method of transport of freight.
- Increased car parking facilities should be provided.

What we want for Hackney



HOUSING

Housing is a major issue in the debate about the regeneration of the inner cities. Poor housing causes those with economic ability to move out of inner cities leaving others behind to cope with ever increasing problems.

Research has revealed that old housing stock in Hackney was poorly built because of limited investment value. Overuse of this stock has led to large areas of decay.

When councils began to take responsibility for the problem by developing their own housing, council housing was a dream for those living in appalling conditions.

Since then council housing has developed in a permanent crisis. Many schemes have been ill-conceived by planners who did not understand the lifestyles of the people they were building for. This led to development of management attitudes which were hellbent on using authority to shape tenants to fit the housing stock. Repressive tenancy conditions were imposed which demanded set behaviour from the tenants and their children. Breach of these conditions led to eviction from what was supposed to be public housing.

Because housing was first developed for people 'in need', there is still an attitude of paternalism deeply entrenched in town hall attitudes. There is a complete lack of imagination and drive from both officials and members in

developing a real strategy. Much energy has been expended in preventing tenants in becoming truly involved.

Racial discrimination

Every public landlord operates a racial allocation system. This will not change while there is poor standard housing stock. Bad housing alongside unemployment is a real contributor to the rise in tension in inner cities.

Social control

Governments have used housing as instruments of social control. It is expensive for industry to operate in inner cities. Those that are able move out.

Subsidy or investment?

The social image of public housing is 'subsidised housing.' If private business was developing housing it would be called investment. And that is what it is. We are failing future generations because what we have built is now falling down. Without a major investment programme in housing future generations will face a housing crisis which will have major repercussions.

Owner occupation versus private tenants

All political parties have supported the concept of privatisation. Although socialist parties have claimed that private medicine and education is unfair they have given encouragement to owner occupation and with the exception of in 1945 have put more cash into owner occupation.

Oh what a lovely theatre

The Theatre Workshop Story, by Howard Goorney (Eyre Methuen, £8.95)

Anybody who knows and has an affection for the Theatre Royal at Stratford - and over the years that must number thousands of Hackney residents - will enjoy this book enormously. Written by one of the longstanding actors in the company, it is not a dry academic work written from the outside, but an honest and warm appreciation of the great "Theatre Workshop" from its origins in Ewan McColl's membership of the Salford Clarion Players in 1929 until 1974, when the last of the old guard left before redevelopment overtook the whole area.

Originally its base was Manchester, and this was where McColl and Joan Littlewood decided, in the early 1930s, to try to build a popular left-wing theatre which would mean something to working-class audiences who felt estranged from the drawing room melodramas which were the staple diet of the provincial and much West End theatre. They both had an uneasy relationship with the Communist Party and in fact were expelled early on in their venture for believing that art was connected with politics. In retrospect, this casts an unfair light on the Communist Party which in many other respects played an exemplary role in cultural politics in that era. What distinguished the workshop was its commitment to the creation of an "ensemble" theatre, a company of players with a long-term commitment to the group, who took every element of theatre seriously: movement, voice, dance, and who subsumed individual talent under the more important idea of the total interrelationship of the group as a group. They toured mining villages in South Wales, spent several years doing one-night shows in church halls and so on, building up a distinctive style, and mixing established plays (but interpreted in very unestablished ways) with plays written by Ewan McColl and developed by the "Workshop". After 15 years or so on the road, based mainly in the north, they came to the Theatre Royal, Stratford, in 1952.

For all of its existence, some 40 years, it was run on a shoestring. When they came to Stratford, most of the group actually lived in the theatre itself, rarely going out from week to week, living on a diet of tea, toast and free Abdullah cigarettes donated for the various productions. They were heavily penalised for their heretical views about relating the theatre to working-class people, and consistently denied grants by the Arts Council, or offered trivial amounts, when other much less distinguished theatres were getting large subsidies. Yet in the 1950s and 1960s they established one of the most important theatre companies in post-war Europe and were hailed for their brilliance in Czechoslovakia, Russia, France, Scandinavia and Germany - and shunned in Britain. When they were asked to represent Britain at an international theatre festival in Paris in 1955, Harry Corbett remembers that they had so little money that they had to carry the set over on the boat as hand luggage.

Trusted

To east London they brought a different kind of Shakespeare. They bought Shaw, O'Casey, Eugene O'Neill, Brecht (for the first time in insular Britain), many modern European playwrights and of course they brought Brendan Behan. In a way the Theatre Workshop made Behan, because they put as much effort into giving his plays a strength of form as he did himself. And after that for a few years they seemed to have discovered that rare ability to be both popular and politically principled. Between 1956 and 1964 the theatre was frequently packed (as was the bar), as people got to trust the Theatre Royal at Stratford as somewhere where you wouldn't be short-changed. They produced Behan of course, but Shelagh Delaney, Stephen Lewis' "Sparrows Can't Sing", Frank Norman's "Fings Ain't What They Used To Be", Robin Chapman and Richard Kane's "High Street, China" and of course "Oh, What A Lovely War".

At the time I was in the Young Socialists in Southend and, self-righteous and con-

temptuous of all diversionary things like culture as we were, we were somehow attracted to the Theatre Royal as if it were magic. It was magic in those days, actually. CND was in the air and youth culture was beginning to flex its muscles. And the area round Angel Lane then seemed to be very alive. We made the mini-bus trip down the Southend Arterial on many Saturday nights quite ready on return with the music and drama of this revolutionary theatre.

Tough area

After the play was over, the actors and actresses used to come round to the bar and people would usually stay and sing together (there was always a pianist) and it just felt very unpretentious and friendly. I can remember nearly detail of "Oh What A Lovely War", although it is 18 years ago since I saw it; it kept the whole packed audience in awe right through the play and when it ended there was a short speech saying that the war was not yet over, which was followed by a stunned silence. It was absolutely brilliant theatre, and it had sited itself geographically and politically in a very tough and new constituency.

The theatre is still there, of course, and from time to time something exciting still happens. Usually the pantomime is good. But its great era has passed, partly because in the end people couldn't survive without money - and the theatre will always need subsidy - and partly because the politics outside was so hostile or indifferent to appreciating the role theatre could play in making people's lives more active and developed. Local Labour councils were reluctant to subsidise this weird and eccentric theatre which probably wasn't very much used by local ratepayers anyway, and so was the Arts Council who didn't approve very much of all this political seriousness. But for a decade or so it was one of the most important theatrical ensembles in Europe, and we were lucky enough to have it in East London where it certainly did have an impact on many local people's lives.

Ken Worpole

CO-OP TO EXPAND

Junction Housing Co-operative was started to provide communal, co-operative housing in the Dalston ward. This is about us, our history, problems, and where we are going. If you are interested in this sort of housing, please contact us, as we are looking for new members.

We started about two years ago. There were four of us living in one house and we

had been talking about a co-op. Some other people came along, and we decided to start a co-op. The idea would be two or more houses run on communal lines within walking distance of each other, the houses to be owned by the co-op, the co-op managed by its members, who were also its tenants. We would pay a fair rent. Each house would decide its own internal arrangements but we

would not provide self-contained flats. A house probably would have communal kitchen, dining- and living-rooms, each tenant having his or her own room.

Registered

We were able to form a co-operative company registered with the Friendly Society, and in turn registered with Hackney Council,

HACKNEY CO-OP COLUMN

Do you need any of the following: bikes, beds, beautiful furniture, building repairs, badges, secretarial services, poster printing, book publisher? You can get any of these from worker-controlled co-ops based in Hackney. Over the last six months, the number of workers in co-ops in Hackney has more than doubled - from 27 to 57, and it looks very likely that this number will double again by the spring.

At the same time, the activities the co-ops are engaged in are increasing, too, and by the end of the year, there will be among others co-ops involved in car assembly, wholefoods, knitting and silk-screen printing.

Hackney People's Press, as a member of Industrial Common Ownership Movement, is committed to the growth of a large co-operative sector in Hackney, and therefore intends to carry regular coverage of the co-operative sector as it develops, and hopes that readers will make an effort to use Hackney co-ops in these early days.

Mosquito

Mosquito Bikes is a bike repair co-op based in the basement of 18 Ashwin Street, opposite Dalston Junction station, and it's open Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm.

Mosquito was set up in conjunction with Bootstrap Enterprises who have a defin-

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Mosquito Bikes

Cycle Repair Co-operative



In 'Brass Tacks' basement
at 18 Ashwin Street E8
Cycle entrance through
yard in Abbot Street

Opening hours 10-6
Monday to Saturday
or give us a buzz
on 01-254-0775

to operate in the Dalston Ward (the closeness of houses limited us to an area, street patterns seemed to suggest a ward).

We approached the Housing Corporation to register with them, which is where our real problem has arisen. A change of government, with cuts, meant that we had to do a number of studies of alternative ways to finance the co-op, in addition to the usual Corporation grant. None of these looked possible if people without good incomes were to live in the co-op: all studies eliminated about 90 per cent of members.

We have come up with two possible options we are exploring and feel confident enough to go ahead with whichever seems most reasonable. Along with housing, we foresee sharing other things: the idea is to have a real community. We prefer to live communally for companionship, sharing of domestic chores, sharing of skills and resources, the benefits of shared childcare to parents, children and non-parents alike.

If you might be interested in joining us, contact us at 20 Parkholme Road, E8; tel 249 3768.

WHAT'S ON

Theatre

HALF MOON THEATRE

Sun 11 - Sun 25 October:
Gorilla Festival. For two weeks in October, the Half Moon will be hosting a fast and exciting festival of alternative theatre. Over 20 companies will be taking part, including 7:84, Lumiere & Son and Cliffhanger Theatre Co. There will also be theatre workshops by Roddy Maude-Roxby of Theatre Machine and Rob Walker, Artistic Director of the Half Moon.

The festival was conceived by Rob Walker along with various alternative theatre groups, as a celebration of the achievements of Alternative Theatre over the past ten years. It was called Gorilla Festival because all these groups face an uncertain future as a result of Arts Council cuts, and the festival is intended also as an act of defiance.

Events at the New Half Moon

213 Mile End Road, E1.
Sun 11: Combination Cabaret 7.30 pm.
Mon 12: 7:84 - 'One Big Blow' (2 days): 8.00 pm.
Wed 14: Controlled Attack - Cabaret. 8.00 pm.
Thu 15: Avon Touring - 'Riot' (3 days): Sellers' 8.00 pm
Sun 18: Band Night with - Pookie Snackenburger, Oxy & the Morons, Controlled Attack. 7.30pm
Mon 19: Impact Theatre - 'Damerungstrasse 55' 8.00 pm.
Wed 21: Cliffhanger - 'Captive Audience'. 8.00 pm.
Thu 22: Three Women - 'Follies Berserk' 8.00 pm
Fri 23: Lumiere & Son - 'Tip (2 days): Top Condition' (8pm) & Faceless Theatre - 'Muhammed Ali' (9.30)
Sun 25: 'Tip Top Condition' & Alternative Cabaret

Events at the Old Half Moon

27 Alie St, E1.
Mon 12: Theatre Workshops with Roddy Maude-Roxby & Rob Walker 11.00 am.
Sat 17: Tara Arts Group - 'Diwaali' 8.00 pm
Sun 18: 'Diwaali' 7.30 pm
Mon 19: Obstacles (8pm) & (2 days): National Revue Co.
Wed 21: Cirrus - 'Let's Call (3 days): It A Day' 8.00 pm
Sat 24: Sensible Footwear/ (2 days): Skirting Board (8pm) & Hardware Cabaret.

For further information, ring the Half Moon Box Office on 790 4000.

LITTLE ANGEL MARIONETTE THEATRE

14 Dagmar Passage, Cross St, N1 (Book by phone on 226 1787)
Sats & Suns until 11 October: The Wild Night of the Witches Perfs: 3 pm.
Sat matinee, 3 October: Variety Turns (3-5 yr olds) Perf: 11 am.
Sat matinee, 10 & 17 October: Violet Philpott (3-5yrs) 11 am.
Sats & Suns from 17 October: The Fisherman and his Soul (For children 6yrs & over). Perfs: 3 pm.

For further information, phone the box office. Remember, you must book by phone.



Better dead than red? A dramatic scene from the anti-nuclear film 'The War Game', showing at the Rio on 18 October. (Nat. Film Archive)

HOXTON HALL THEATRE

128a Hoxton St, N1. (739 5431)

Fri 2 Oct: Forces of the Small by Centre Ocean Stream. A Story of a human-like figure and his encounters with four forces: his Subconscious, the Spirit of Life, Change and Growth. A combination of elaborate costumes, masks, skilled dances and specially composed music.
Sat 3 & Sun 4 Oct: Drama Weekend.
Fri 9 Oct: Madhouse Theatre presents the Best of British Lunacy.
Sat 10 Oct: Oaklanders, old-time social. Tickets: £1.50; pensioners 30p, children & claimants 40p.

Cinema

KONAK CINEMA 11 Stoke Newington Rd (254 2415)

October Programme:

Sun 4: Enter the Ninja
Sun 11: History of the World Part I
Sun 18: Honky Tonk Freeway
Remaining programme to be confirmed.
 Tickets: £1.90 adults
 £1.00 children

For programme at the Rio Cinema see advertisement on this page.

Meetings

MATTHEW O'HARA COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES & COMMUNITY CARE

October's meeting of the Matthew O'Hara Committee has been deferred until 8 October, in order to discuss issues raised at Community Care Workshop on Single Homelessness on the previous evening. However, future meetings will take place on the first Thursday of the month, as usual. Committee meetings are open to anyone to attend. Issue No.2 of Matthew O'Hara Committee News is out - 38 pages, with features on Mental Handicap in Hackney Alternatives to Prison, Janet Cresswell and Broadmoor, etc. Available at Centerprise (35p) or by post (50p) from: 177 Glenarm Road, E5 ONB.

OCTOBER

HCND DIARY

HACKNEY CND DIARY OF EVENTS

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|---|
| Mon 5 October | 8.00 | Ordinary General Meeting Speaker on London Region. |
| Sat 10 October | | BONN: Nuclear-free Europe rally. END coach leaves Kings X 8 pm Thurs 8, back 11 pm Sun 11. £25 return. |
| St 10 - Sun 11 | | ST. GERMAIN AU MONT D'OR: Weekend conference "for a popular non-nuclear, non-aligned defence". |
| Mon 12 | 8.00 | Business meeting. |
| Dalston Library | | Showing of THE WAR GAME |
| Sun 18 | 1.00 | THE BOMB. Showing of the Jonathon Dimbleby film. |
| Tues 20 | 8.00 | THE BOMB. With Frank Allaun, MP. |
| Shoreditch Town Hall, E.C.1 | | Second showing of THE BOMB |
| Wed 21 | 8.00 | HACKNEY RALLY. Speaker, Ernie Roberts, MP. NATIONAL DEMO, Victoria Embankment to Hyde Park. Main speakers 4.00. |
| Stoke Newington Town Hall, N.16 | | Business Meeting. |
| Thurs 22 | 8.00 | MARCH ACROSS THE SKY. Let off a firework for peace. |
| Shoreditch Town Hall | | Ordinary General Meeting. Two women speakers - mothers who went to USA and USSR on a peace mission. |
| Sat 24 | 11.00 | |
| Stoke Newington Common, N.16 | | |
| Mon 26 | 8.00 | |
| Dalston Library | | |
| Sat 31 | 7.30 | |
| Mon 2 Nov | 8.00 | |
| Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street | | |

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Tel : 254 6677

OCTOBER

Weekly programme:

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Mon 5 for six days | Tess (A) - 4.30 & 7.35 |
| Mon 12 for six days | Chariots of Fire (A) 6.00 & 8.15 (Sat only 3.45) |
| Mon 19 for six days | Providence (X) and Muriel (A) |
| Mon 26 for six days | Sleeping Beauty (U) |
| Sunday matinees: | |
| Sun 4 at 2.00 | Diabolo Menthe (AA) Anne & Muriel (X) |
| Sun 11 at 2.00 | Ballad of Joe Hill (AA) Elvira Madigan (A) |
| Sun 18 | Programme unconfirmed |
| Sun 25 at 2.00 | Solaris |

Ticket prices £1.80. Children 90p. OAP's 60p

Send it to WHAT'S ON

If you have any event which you want to publicise, send it along to our What's On page and we will list it free! Just write down all the relevant details, date, time of event, what it's about, cost of entry, etc., and send it to: What's On, Hackney People's Press, 47a Grayling Road, N16. Listings for the November issue should be sent by 17 October.

Babies fight the bomb threat

Babies Against the Bomb (BAB) is a fast-growing new group based in north London and soon to put down roots in Hackney.

"I was horrified by the threat of nuclear war - even more so after my baby was born," said Sue Taylor of Islington. "The thought of babies and children dying in agony before they've had a fair chance to live is unbearable."

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS has regular meetings on Mondays at 8pm at our new office at 47a Grayling Road, N16. (Down access road beside no.47). If you would like to help write, produce or sell the next issue, then please come along. Or you can ring 806 9211 (evenings and weekends) or leave a message for us on 809 2889 (days).

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS is an alternative non-profit making monthly newspaper produced by an open group of people who live or work in Hackney. We publish the paper because we believe that Hackney needs an alternative to the commercial press to serve the real interests of its people. We have no editor and no shareholders and no one is paid by the paper.

HPP is your newspaper: anyone who lives or works in Hackney is welcome to come and help us. All decisions are made collectively.

HPP is sold through various newsagents and shops throughout Hackney. If you think that your newsagent would like to sell it, on sale or return, then please contact us. And if you don't think that you can spare the time to become more involved, but you enjoy reading HPP and think more people should read it, then please get in touch if you are willing to sell a few copies to your friends or neighbours or at meetings.

- Take out a subscription to HPP and guarantee regular delivery! Just send a cheque/PO for £2.80 for one year's subscription to Hackney People's Press, 47a Grayling Road, N16.
- Please make cheques payable to HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS
- Name.....
- Address.....

Karen Butler of Kentish Town BAB said: "I always wanted to do something about the threat of nuclear war, but found it virtually impossible to get out with a small baby. BAB solves this because we meet during the day and take our babies or toddlers along with us. This avoids babysitter problems."

"Lunatics"

Ruth Cameron, another BAB enthusiast, said: "I was fed up feeling powerless while a handful of lunatics were doing their best to get us all blown up. At least I've found out we can do something."

Babies Against the Bomb was founded by Tamar Swade and her year old son, Dario. She says: Some people still hang on to the idea that if we have enough weapons the

enemy will be too scared to attack us, and this will prevent war. But this idea has become nonsense. America and Russia are no longer talking of preventing nuclear war, but of fighting and 'winning' a nuclear war - in Europe. Europe is to be used as a battleground for the superpowers and the frontline in America's defence. What is more, military planners have warned that in a nuclear war Britain would be hit early on because our weapons make us a 'nuisance' and a threat."

Warning

This could happen to your child. This is the warning to parents in the leaflet being printed by BAB. It goes on to give a few of the horrific memories of those who survived the nuclear bomb dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima in 1945.

"...children burned and maimed, screaming in agony for lost parents..."
"...babies suckling charred mothers..."
"...a child trapped under rubble calling desperately for its mother..."
..."a man carrying his eyeballs in his palm..."

No Chances

Many victims - children and adults - were burned in this way. Thousands of innocent victims were killed instantly on that day or died in slow agony within six months. Thousands more have died since from the effects of the bomb or are suffering its effects in the form of blindness, deafness, dumbness, cancer and deformity.

The bomb dropped on Hiroshima was a very small bomb. Today's bombs are a thousand times more powerful."



The leaflet quotes doctors, scientists and even military men who have warned that we cannot survive a nuclear war. Earl Mountbatten, for example, said after 50 years of active service, "In the event of nuclear war, there will be no chances, there will be no survivors - all will be obliterated."

A number of Hackney mothers have expressed interest in being part of a local BAB group. Those interested, please ring Tamar on 267 0474.

vation (Lloyd Report 1981) and the use of nuclear power when no solution to the disposal of nuclear waste has been found (Flowers Report 1978).

We appear to be making declarations of nuclear-free zones to deaf ears. One way of exercising our democratic right to consumer control over the electricity supply industry is to join the Consumer Campaign. Several hundred people have already joined and many more are needed. If you are interested in this campaign, you can send your 11% to:

Consumer Campaign,
Anti-Nuclear Campaign,
PO 216,
Sheffield. S1BD

You should also send a letter to the CEBG explaining your action. More information of nuclear power is available from:

ANC Office,
The Terrapin Building,
Cambridge House,
Division St.,
Sheffield.

The local Hackney Anti-Nuclear Group is next meeting at Centreprise, Kingsland High Street on Thurs 8 Oct. Tel: 226 1799

Anti-Nukes hit back at CEBG

A National Consumer Campaign has been organised by the Anti-Nuclear Campaign. It is asking people to withhold a symbolic 11% of their electricity bills and to pay the money into the Consumer Campaign Trust Fund. 11% is the percentage of electricity currently generated by nuclear power. The Trust will hold the money on behalf of the electricity boards until they agree to phase out nuclear power. If withdrawers are threatened with disconnection, the Trust Fund will release the money and the consumer will then deduct 11% from the next electricity bill. Several solicitors have been involved in the drafting of the Trust deed and a QC has been consulted. It has been estimated that 50,000 withdrawers would be ample to force the CEBG to think again about nuclear power. Some London councils have

already declared themselves nuclear-free zones. Hackney opposes the transport of nuclear waste through the borough and this must show the nuclear industries that a growing number of people realise the real danger of nuclear power. But what is happening in response to this growing concern? In London electricity from nuclear power stations at Sizewell, Bradwell and Dungeness continues to flow into the national grid and Londoners pay for it. Trains carrying nuclear waste continue to slip through Dalston Junction during the night, passing through three times a week on their way to Windscale. Nationally, the demand for electricity continues to fall. Faced with the problem of overproduction, the CEBG plans to close 22 conventional power stations. But at the same time the

government has ordered a massive new nuclear power programme, involving the same model power station as that at Three Mile Island that came close to melt-down in 1979. The estimated cost of this programme is £15 billion, spread over 10 years. At the same time the government is ordering spending cuts of £2 billion a year, mostly in education, housing, health and social services. Meanwhile radioactive waste is building up, stored in tanks ever more prone to leaks. These tanks have a 25 year life. The life of the waste is several thousand years. And yet we make import contracts with Japan and Europe to bring more nuclear waste to Windscale. Government reports have questioned the economic strategy of the CEBG, the lack of research into the possibilities of conser-

PETTY BUREAU

